

# **Idaho Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Board Meeting**

**Thursday – August 5, 2004  
Division of Building Safety – Meridian, Idaho**

*The following report is not intended to be a verbatim transcript of the discussions at the meeting, but is intended to record the significant features of those discussions.*

## **CALL TO ORDER**

Chairman Minegar called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. on Thursday, August 5, 2004, at the Division of Building Safety, Meridian, Idaho.

## **PRESENT**

Board members present were: Mr. Pat Minegar, Mr. Russ Firkins, Ms. Carol Alexander, Mr. Jim Bledsoe, Mr. Steve Brown, and Mr. Steve Keys

Absent was Mr. Mike Wisdom, Board Member.

Present from the Division of Building Safety were: Mr. Dave Munroe, Administrator; Ms. Marsi Woody, Financial Officer; Ms. Kay Manweiler, Deputy Attorney General; Mr. Ted Hogander, HVAC Bureau Chief; Mr. Russ Owen, Program Supervisor; Ms. Carrol Emery, HVAC Licensing; and Ms. Melinda Doan, Administrative Assistant and Recording Secretary.

Also present was: Mr. Bob Corbell, HVAC/IEC's Associations; Mr. Jack Rayne, Building Bureau Chief; Mr. Gary Van Hees, Heritage Propane; Mr. Kevin Keller, PPS Co./Britegas Propane; Mr. Jeff Boyd, Suburban Propane; Mr. Marc Bernsen, IBEW #291; Mr. Rod Clay, Plumbers & Pipe Fitter LU 296; Ms. Rosie Roscoe, BSU; Mr. Stan Brings, Boise State; Mr. Ed Howland, BSU; Mr. John Paustain, SMWIA 213; Mr. Jerry Peterson, Building Trades; Mr. Dave Plew, Plews Heating, TF; Mr. Bruce Graham, Quality Heating; Mr. Chris Compton, NIC/HVACRedu.net; Mr. John Cantrell, US Dept. of Labor Bur. Of Apprenticeship & Train; Mr. Bill Hartman, A-1 Fireplace Co & Hartman Heating; Mr. Dan Brizee, Brizee Heating; Mr. Jim Joy, HPBA; Mr. Sheldon LeBow, Leisure Time, Inc; Mr. Jerry Hihath, IGC; Mr. John Merk, S.E.Wa N.E. OR SM JATC; Mr. Floyd Reichert, SMWIA Local 213; Mr. Gary Smith, NWHBPBA; Mr. Chuck Taylor, Idaho Air & Heating.

## **INTRODUCTIONS**

Chairman Minegar welcomed all attendees. Guests were encouraged to speak and asked to state their names and affiliation(s), speaking clearly for the record. Guests were asked to silence cell phones and pagers.

## **MINUTES OF MAY 20 AND JULY 8, 2004**

Chairman Minegar requested the board move to accept the minutes of the Idaho Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Board meeting of May 20, 2004, and the tele-conference meeting held July 8, 2004. Mr. Steve Keys made a motion to approve minutes as presented. Ms. Carol Alexander seconded. All were in favor. None opposed.

### **EDUCATION**

Ms. Rosie Rosco passed around a handout concerning the College of Applied Technology's apprentice program and gave an overview of the current curriculum already in place for plumbing and electrical. BSU offers full time day programs as well as correspondence courses for outlying rural areas. The correspondence students are mailed their chapter lessons and must successfully complete that section before advancing to the next. A licensed contractor or journeyman must oversee the student. Mr. Ed Howland, in charge of BSU's correspondence courses, is always available by phone to answer any questions or give direction where needed. The correspondence students would take their exam at one of six proctoring locations throughout the state. They are: Northern Idaho College in Coeur d'Alene, Boise State University, Idaho State University in Pocatello, Lewis & Clark State College in Lewiston, College of Southern Idaho in Twin Falls, and Eastern Idaho Technical College in Idaho Falls. Students 50-60 miles from a school would be eligible for correspondence or satellite classes. Each school would determine from their applicants who would be eligible for correspondence courses. There is always an instructor available for questions and students are encouraged to drop in on existing classrooms. Plumbing's correspondence is broken into half-year increments. Students must complete the whole year to receive credit. Each half is broken into lesson segments and due dates for each lesson are assigned. Students are penalized hours if lessons are late. Open book tests are given at each half-year period and students must take final test at one of the school sites and is not an open book test.

Local classes are taught two nights a week, three hours a night, either Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday, both in Boise and Nampa. The Plumbing program and lab is located entirely in Nampa. Many state inspectors and journeymen currently working in the trade are the instructors in each program. The electrical program uses the IEC and plumbing uses a state produced curriculum program created from a grant through the Professional Technical Education. When you buy a program like IEC they update it yearly. When you create your own you have to update it. Professional Technical Education has provided funding to help develop and update the plumbing program and hire instructors.

It would be up to HVAC board as to when BSU could get a program together. Factors would be defining the specialty categories and finding a critical mass of people in each area of the state for each proposed specialty category. BSU and the Bureau of Apprenticeship Training could work with the Board to help find curriculums that meet the Boards requirements. The cost depends on the number of students enrolled. Plumbing and Electrical are in the \$600.00 to \$700.00 range.

Mr. Bob Corbell stated the soonest an apprentice program could be in place would be September of 2005. An HVAC program would be different from the plumbing and electrical programs

because of the multitude of specialty areas and the number of students in each specialty category. Professional help from the trades is required to make this work. Grand fathered licenses would not require testing at renewal time with the exception of apprentices and journeymen wishing to advance. The need for testing is fairly immediate. Mr. Gary Van Hees spoke regarding the Washington state electrical limited license procedures and the discrepancies in the requirements for the continuing education courses and testing versus what the licenses actually allowed the person to work on. He asked that our testing and education program be practical to application. Ms. Stephanie Lewis is the director of BSU's assessment division and has been gathering information regarding the HVAC industry. First a curriculum is required, then validation, and then testing. This takes time. Mr. Steve Keys stated that BSU's program has worked better than the program that the Electrical Bureau had used in the past. The state system of training is a good system and having the six institutions across the state is a great asset. The Division of Building Safety already has several programs in place with BSU. Commonality throughout all the programs would be more workable. Concentration should be geared towards what programs work for the industry. Package the training programs towards consistency with other Bureaus. The other Bureau programs might need to change some to accomplish this.

### **SPECIALTY CATEGORIES**

The Board is looking to the Hearth industry and what they already have existing to possibly incorporate that as their education source. The Hearth industry voiced concern regarding giving their journeyman the same license as everybody else in the HVAC industry rather than a specialty journeyman license. Chairman Minegar reiterated that some items had to be put aside in order to get this legislation passed and since the law was passed with deadlines in place our working focus is to meet those deadlines. Since those laws cannot be changed now we will have to go back to do cleanup.

Diversification of the HVAC industry is the catch in resolving specific specialty areas. Most businesses have sub-components to their primary businesses. Licenses must flow with specialty components inside specialty licenses. The law was written similar to plumbing and electrical but the realization is that the HVAC trade is very different.

Discussion was entered regarding using the codebooks as a tool for defining specialty categories, however, some fields are not found in the adopted codebooks so referenced materials would be required to draw information from. Some of the references will have to be per manufacturers specifications and relative codes or ordinances.

### **APPRENTICE PROGRAM**

Mr. Bruce Graham, Quality Heating, presented a handout of proposed descriptions of education and training. Apprentices would have to sign up for classes starting with core classes, register with the state, be employed by a contractor or specialty contractor, and must have a supervising journeyman assigned and registered to verify education hours. The core classes would be required by everyone and would need 1000 hours of on the job training (OJT) before going into any specialty category. The apprentice could then move into a specialty class and would have to complete all class work, testing, and OJT before applying for that specialty journeyman

certificate. An apprentice may work on several specialties at one time but the total number of OJT hours must meet the total required for each specialty. After receiving a specialty journeyman certificate for a specific specialty area, he may work unsupervised in only that specific specialty. This would give the person the ability to work in one area while pursuing the other areas. In theory, the more specialty certification a person obtained the more the person would be paid which is the incentive to complete all the courses. To complete the core classes and OJT would take approximately 9 months. Credit would only be given for OJT hours if working under the direct supervision of a qualified journeyman with that specific endorsement. EXAMPLE: If the supervising journeyman did not have endorsement in gas heating appliances and the apprentice is working on his gas heating certification, the OJT would not be counted towards his required hours. For clarification, when the word specialty was used it was referring to the different classifications that have already been determined by the industry as a specialty category. Mr. Bruce Graham reviewed the specialty classifications as being: both residential and commercial for air conditioning & heat pump, oil heating appliances, gas heating appliances, electric heating appliances, hydronic systems; plus commercial HVAC controls, air distribution systems, and ventilation and air balance. There is also a residential category and commercial category that would be obtained after completing ALL the other specialty categories only. The commercial OJT is basically doubled and is a four-year program rather than the two-year residential program. The class time would include both the residential and commercial class time. For clarification, these would be additional endorsements to one license.

After debate about adding new categories and more classes, Mr. Bruce Graham stated that in talking with the colleges and universities, the more categories you create the more expense and the harder to schedule and fill classes. You have to have a certain number of students to even put on a class and make it affordable so the more consolidation of classes the easier and more cost efficient it will be.

Mr. Bruce Graham continued with the explanation that an apprentice would be able to obtain multiple specialty certifications and would only be a journeyman when all categories are obtained. This would require change to the statutes under the classification of competency, section 54-5009, number 4, which includes the verbiage specifically geared to the hearth products. Mr. Bruce Graham felt that the last sentence should be removed which reads: *A certificate of competency issued for the installation of hearth and barbecue products shall include the authority for all low voltage work necessary to complete the installations.* A specialty journeyman definition should be added, as well as, wording to define residential and commercial specifications. Mr. Bruce Graham asked the board to approve the fundamentals of the draft presented. Chairman Minegar replied that a motion does not need to be made by the board and that the committee should press on with what they are doing. Mr. Bruce Graham asked if the board's intention is to add a category for hearths. Chairman Minegar responded that he wanted to hear from the hearth industry before making that determination. Mr. Jim Bledsoe requested something in writing from the hearth industry regarding the programs already in place. Mr. Bruce Graham stated decisions would need to be made regarding the direction they want to go so that the education people can start looking at what needs to be put together and get going on it. Ms. Carol Alexander added that the only difference in the categories seems to be the source of fuel and requested an all-encompassing **OTHER** category that would include wood since they are inspected also. Chairman Minegar directed the board to remember the board's

liability is that within our law we need to make sure that what they are doing is safe and done to codes. If within their education, training and licensing the areas are covered it shouldn't matter to us. Mr. Steve Keys stated he felt the classroom requirements are too much and will require consolidation. The potential is there to obtain 15 different licenses if we were to use this format. Chairman Minegar stated that this law and license must cater to all sizes of companies.

There was discussion concerning what categories specific types of installations would fall under. Chairman Minegar responded that you would have to determine this by what is being inspected. Chairman Minegar reiterated that when the bill was written the board was forced to include hearths because gas piping and venting was included. The hearth industry has a good program in place. The board does not intend to dictate to the hearth industry what the board wants them to do but rather how they will work with the board within the law that was passed.

Chairman Minegar directed the attendees and guests that a committee has been formed to address these issues and have now presented a rough draft as a starting point so that any ideas or suggestions should be E-Mailed to the Bureau and will then be passed on to the board members and the committee.

### **BREAK**

Chairman Minegar called for a 15-minute break at 10:25.

### **NATIONAL FIREPLACE INSTITUTE (NFI)**

Chairman Minegar handed out a photocopy of a page from the NFI book listing the hours and exams required by the NFI and explained that if the hearth industry adopts the NFI program it would allow them to do gas piping and venting.

Mr. Gary Smith, Northwest Hearth, Patio and BBQ Association, gave an overview of the NFI. It is an independent organization, which has set up training and testing for the hearth industry in gas, wood burning, and pellet with certification in each category because they are very different fuels and different technologies. This program was put together based on national standards. It covers safety, sizing, electrical, combustion, and venting. Venting is different for some appliances and this course recognizes that fact. This is specifically designed for the hearth industry. The industry understands that they are caught up in the legislation which is one reason this was put together and believe this is a very easy solution and is already working and recognized in other states. Mr. Smith stated he believed the law as written would allow the Board to recognize whatever training and testing it chose. The Hearth industry does not currently require NFI training and certifications, however, three of the major national brands are beginning to require all their national dealerships and distributors to be certified in each category. Primarily the manufacturers specifications, local codes and gas loads are used as a basis for installation requirements by NFI and that NFPA211 has been adopted and it directs readers to check the local jurisdiction codes. The gas exam refers to the national code. Mr. Smith will check with NFI regarding inclusion of oil fuel appliances. Certification from NFI would include a three-year continuing education requirement. The NFI has a 750 page training manual with 250 pages per section. Training is generally done on an individual basis with

additional classroom training available at the request of the student. At this time OJT is not a requirement. Mr. Kevin Keller and Mr. Dan Brizee gave testimonial to the difficulty of the test and the validity of the NFI program in reference to the trade. A suggestion was made to combine the NFI program with .net courses or a BSU program to allow for proctoring of tests and incorporation of hands on training. NFI information packets will be given to the Bureau to be mailed out to the board members for review.

Chairman Minegar explained that we want to make sure the information we get is representative of the industry. Input would be required from the industry to help rewrite the law if this were to be adopted and to specifically define the hearth industry. Mr. Russell Firkins mentioned that the law is already in place to allow the board to approve a training program or amend it.

Mr. Dan Brizee requested a sub-committee be formed regarding OJT hours. Chairman Minegar asked that information be provided to the board members prior to the next meeting for review. Mr. Gary Smith was directed to provide the entire program to the Bureau. If NFI is approved there could be classroom hours incorporated here in Idaho. Chairman Minegar spoke to the mandated requirement that we follow the International codes (I-codes). If there are concerns within the I-codes within the industry those concerns will need to be addressed as well. Mr. Gary Smith stated that training includes the International Mechanical codes or could include them. Consideration will need to be given to over-lapping areas in order to avoid dual training situations. There would need to be recognition of certifications.

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Jerry Hihath, Intermountain Gas Company (IGC), Safety and Service Training manager, spoke concerning the rules regarding pressure tests required for gas piping. Currently being used is the 20 LB test, for 20 minutes, on a 30 LB gauge. Codebook tests are inadequate. They have found that the most accurate level of any gauge is the middle of the gauge. On the larger systems you would use 60 LBS on a 100 LB gauge for 1/2 hour for each 500 cubic feet of volume. IGC has found this to be the best test available and many times ask for longer tests of up to one hour to eliminate many leaks not found on the shorter test times. AVISTA uses Federal Gas Codes. Since AVISTA doesn't do inspections anymore the cities and counties in AVISTA's area of coverage have adopted AVISTA guidelines. Local jurisdictions have the authority to require above the minimum code requirements for pressure tests. IGC would like the state law be amended to include these higher test requirements.

The subject of emergency, after hours, testing was discussed. The propane industry would like this same capability. Mr. Jerry Hihath stated that the gas companies have already been witnessing pressure tests, setting meters, and supplying gas to the main customers house, just on the downside of that meter, so that gas is available for the installer to install and test fire the equipment. The gas or propane company would leave a sticker of approval so that the inspector knows it was witnessed. The final inspections are done by the jurisdiction in charge. IGC always puts a call into the local jurisdiction to let them know of the job and also requires a permit number before they turn on the gas. The IMC, section 107, already addresses this as a standard procedure. This is only on existing gas lines, maybe furnace replacement, or usually new piping on a conversion job where the owner has one type of furnace and changes to another type when it

breaks down. Chairman Minegar requested that we keep track of this for when we address code changes or amendments in the future.

The subject of utility companies being exempt from licensing requirements was discussed. Utilities only want the ability to do safety items, as needed for immediate hazard situations. Installations are not done except in the emergency situations or for recall work. The IGC is restricted to thermal couplers and flex connectors. They are required to do safety audits on equipment and if something is found they do not diagnose it. They refer to a dealer. The jurisdiction is defined by where inspections start and stop. General thought was that if work is just at the propane tank or the fuel supply they should be exempt up to the meter. But if they put someone inside the home they need the same license. The IPUC dictates that every time the gas company goes inside the structure they have to do a safety audit and turn the appliance on and check the venting and operation. That is as the fuel supplier but not as a contractor or journeyman. Utility in Idaho code does not include the competition element. "Utility" meant a company that provided fuel but this has expanded and they are now competitive with the private sector. If the board opted to change the law to exclude utility companies the wording would have to be very specific. Chairman Minegar requested Mr. Bob Corbell put some guidelines together and bring to the board for review.

### **LOW/HIGH PRESSURE CODES**

The definition of commercial, light commercial and residential job sites were discussed and to which category specific codes would be designated. BTU's per piece of equipment, square footage of the building, air quality, and occupancy were all ideas presented as determining factors. Possibly the solution is to change the definition to residential/light commercial since both use some of the same equipment. The codebook addresses this already. It was agreed that a person would need to be qualified to work on a piece of equipment based on the specific controls it has. The intent of this discussion is that the education process should meet the safety requirements for each level of equipment, not to limit what contractors can and cannot do. The safety issue is determined after the installation not just during. Chairman Minegar invited Jerry Peterson to put some thought into this and submit to the board a solution that would work for the board without restricting current practices but would include further education.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Mr. Jeff Boyd spoke as to multiple location companies and what the licensing requirements will be. The parent company will be the contractor, will be issued permits, and may then send them on to each of their offices. A designated individual at each office will be responsible for completing and submitting the permit and calling in inspections. The supervising journeyman could sign the company name to the permit with his signature.

Mr. Bob Corbell addressed grandfathering because many people have gone out and taken classes prior to the July 1, 2004, deadline and we have a large group of people that will qualify by the time we get the grandfathering done and the education started. Chairman Minegar asked that this be addressed in the next meeting. We may just need to get a statement from the employee verifying qualifications. Right now, during grandfathering, we have people applying

with education only as their qualification and according to our law they may be engaged in or qualified to be engaged in the capacity for which they are applying. Chairman Minegar stated that it also says per board approval. Mr. Ted Hogander reiterated that we only have the three categories to license with at this time and the working staff does not have the ability to differentiate between one year or ten year journeymen. The contractor does have the ability to pay them for their experience. Right now we need tests in place to allow for new journeymen and new contractors. The statute written now will be changed down the road. It will evolve as we go and the non-compliant individuals will be weeded out. Mr. Dave Munroe asked the board to appoint two or three members to meet with the Bureau to review some of the issues at hand. Chairman Minegar requested Mr. Jim Bledsoe, Mr. Steve Keys, and Mr. Mike Wisdom work with the Bureau. Mr. Russ Owen suggested at that time they also go through some of the applications so they understand what the Bureau is up against and precedence could be set.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Civil penalties will be addressed in Post Falls.

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 12:31 p.m.

COPY

---

DAVE MUNROE  
SECRETARY OF THE BOARD

COPY

---

MELINDA DOAN  
MINUTES RECORDER